

Preface

This report summarizes air quality trends for outdoor or ambient air, based on monitoring data collected in North Carolina from 1972 to 1995 by the North Carolina Division of Air Quality and from 1978 to 1995 by the National Atmospheric Deposition Program/National Trends Network (NADP/NTN). It covers the following pollutants: particulate matter (TSP and PM₁₀), carbon monoxide (CO), Ozone (O₃), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and lead (Pb). These are referred to as criteria air pollutants because the federal government and the state have established standards for them to protect the public health and welfare. The report also includes data on acid deposition, or acid rain, as measured by pH, based on NADP/NTN monitoring.

For each of the six criteria air pollutants, this report has a section describing its description, important sources, meteorological interactions, the applicable federal and state standards, and health, welfare and environmental effects. Another section presents similar information about acid precipitation. Statewide trends for each pollutant are shown by a graphical summary and a written synopsis.

A more comprehensive *1972-1995 Ambient Air Quality Trends Report* for North Carolina is scheduled for publication in the Spring of 1998. The comprehensive report is written more technically than this *Summary* and contains more detailed pollutant descriptions, statewide and regional trend analyses, and individual trend analyses for many of the state's monitoring sites. The forthcoming report also will contain statewide trends for pH and other pollutants in precipitation.

Copies of the comprehensive *1972-1995 Trends Report*, the Annual Air Quality Reports (beginning in 1985), and additional copies of this trends summary, are available from:

North Carolina Division of Air Quality
P O Box 29580
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0580

The division welcomes comments regarding this *Summary* or suggestions for improving future reports. Comments may be sent to Mr. G. Stephen Few or Dr. Wayne L. Cornelius at the Division of Air Quality.

Daily air pollution information for several highly populated areas in North Carolina is available to the public through two telephone numbers that provide the current *Air Quality Index* and *pollen counts* (in some areas) in a computer-updated recorded announcement, 24 hours a day:

Statewide toll-free..... 888-AIR-WISE
(for Asheville, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Raleigh, Wilmington,
and Winston-Salem areas)

Charlotte area... 704-333-SMOG

The North Carolina Division of Air Quality maintains an Internet web page with information about environmental permits, ambient air quality, and the vehicle inspection and maintenance program. The DAQ's web address is: <http://daq.state.nc.us/>.